

December 4, 2002

To the Honorable Commissioners of the FCC,

I am writing to you today to comment on Docket No. 02-277, The Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules. I am voicing my support to retain all the FCC rules in question. These rules set limits on concentration of the broadcast industry and serve the public interest by preserving diversity of ownership in the broadcast marketplace. These rules are; The Television-Radio Cross-Ownership Rule, The Broadcast-Newspaper Cross Ownership Ban, The National Television Ownership Rule, The Duopoly Rule for Radio, The Local Television Ownership Rule, and The Dual Network Rule.

What is the value of varied information sources when they are controlled by a single voice? Our values, our freedoms our freedoms, are under attack abroad by terrorists. We are spending billions of dollars and risking the lives of our armed forces to protect these freedoms. These terrorists believe there can be only one voice in the world.

We clearly recognize the value of multiple voices in the marketplace of ideas. Wouldn't it be ironic if we give them away with the stroke of a pen?

The FCC has rules limiting ownership to preserve a healthy marketplace of ideas. If the FCC removes the rules, it undermines the future health of the marketplace of information.

Congress and the Supreme Court have long recognized that a functioning democracy depends on a media open to independent and unconventional news and a varied entertainment media. Media makers working outside the corporate environment continually provide content that is so defined. This unconventionality and variety that stimulates the American people both causes us to constantly question the status quo, and facilitates the ability of Americans to speak with one another. If we exist in an environment in which our news outlets have merged together, both print and broadcast, our ability to open informed discussion is restricted.

I urge you to rule in the public interest on this matter. The public interest will be served by preserving the FCC's Broadcast Media ownership rules. This is what our armed forces are fighting and dying to preserve..

Thank you,

Stephen Shames